

Inspection of Barn Croft Primary School

2 Brunel Road, Walthamstow, London E17 8SB

Inspection dates: 25 April, 4 and 5 May 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

'Caring', 'community' and 'inclusive' are words that describe Barn Croft well. Leaders know their pupils and their families. They give parents and carers lots of practical help, going that extra mile, for example through 'Barn Croft Together'. Almost all parents would recommend the school.

One pupil's comment that the school was their safe space is shared by others. Staff look after the well-being of pupils. There is a strong emphasis on helping pupils to manage their emotional and mental health. Pupils say that staff are there for them should they have any worries or concerns.

Staff teach pupils about differences, such as in relation to families and religions. They learn about different role models, including examples of people from the local area. Pupils show high levels of respect and tolerance. They behave well. Those pupils who need it are given help to find ways of managing their own behaviour.

In some subjects, including in the early years, academic expectations are not high enough. The curriculum is not helping pupils to build the body of knowledge and skills that they should.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders make sure that pupils study a broad range of subjects. They also complement subjects with different half-termly visits and activities to help bring subjects to life. Leaders offer a range of clubs for pupils to participate in at the end of the school day.

Leaders' approach to teaching pupils to read starts right from Nursery. Staff regularly check what pupils know and remember, and weaker readers receive daily one-to-one support. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have made sure that all staff have ongoing training to develop their expertise. Pupils are well supported on their journey to becoming fluent readers. However, occasionally, some staff do not make sure that pupils systematically use their phonics and early writing skills as well as they should.

Some subjects in Years 1 to 6 and areas of learning in the early years are not well designed and sequenced. Leaders have not given enough thought to identifying what they want pupils to know and remember. Some subject content is not ambitious enough. Leaders have started work to review the curriculum, for example in mathematics and science. However, pupils have large gaps in their knowledge, such as how well they know their multiplication tables in mathematics and in their writing of computer programs. In topic work, pupils struggle to understand subject-specific learning.

In numeracy in the early years, where leaders have given more thought to the curriculum, adults present information clearly. They use well-chosen activities, for example, to help children count confidently. However, in other areas, adults do not consistently support children to develop their vocabulary and to practise their skills.

In some subjects, teachers' subject knowledge is developing. To support teachers, leaders are working with other schools to share resources and approaches. Sometimes, adults do not routinely check pupils' misconceptions as they teach. As a result, gaps in pupils' knowledge are not being closed as well as they should.

Leaders share information with staff about pupils with SEND. Many parents commented positively on how well the school identifies and supports their child's needs. These pupils access the same curriculum as their peers, and adults adapt their approaches when they need to. However, sometimes, these adaptations are not as helpful as they could be in supporting pupils to access their learning.

Leaders have a particular focus on helping pupils to develop their confidence and resilience. This includes providing a range of ways for pupils to support each other, such as the Year 6 playground leaders and the work of the school council. Children in the early years are well supported with their physical and emotional development. They learn about routines and being kind to one another.

Pupils are keen to do well, and most have positive attitudes to learning. Teachers pick up on any low-level disruption and successfully keep pupils on track with their learning. Pupils have access to any pastoral support that they need, for example through play therapy and/or mentoring.

Staff across the school are very positive about working at Barn Croft. They feel well supported by leaders. Staff are confident that their workload and well-being are considered by leaders when decisions are made.

Governors have not engaged in sufficient training to help them understand how to hold leaders to account for the quality of education provided by the school. They have been too accepting of information presented to them by leaders. They do not have a secure grasp on weaknesses in the school's curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders manage any risks that may affect the day-to-day safety of pupils well, including reaching out to external agencies. Leaders provide a wide range of expertise and safe spaces in school to help pupils should they need it. Leaders keep a tight oversight of pupils who receive support, for example through the weekly inclusion meetings. While pupils are kept safe on a day-by-day basis, in a few aspects of the school's safeguarding arrangements, leaders' oversight has not been robust enough.

Pupils learn how to develop positive relationships and make safe choices, for example through the content of their personal, social, health and economics lessons. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school's work to keep their children safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects in Years 1 to 6 and in some areas of learning in the early years, leaders have not given sufficient thought to the knowledge that pupils should learn and the sequence that they should learn it. Some curriculum thinking is not ambitious enough. Consequently, pupils are not developing the depth of subject-specific knowledge and vocabulary that they should. Leaders should review their curriculum thinking, starting with the early years. They need to make sure that in all subjects and areas of learning the knowledge and vocabulary that pupils should learn is identified, well sequenced and understood by adults.
- The curriculum is not taught consistently well. Sometimes, adults do not check for and correct misconceptions. In the early years, sometimes, adults do not support children effectively to develop their vocabulary or practise their skills. These weaknesses do not help pupils to close gaps in their knowledge. Leaders should ensure that staff understand how to use assessment well so they can adapt their teaching more effectively.
- Occasionally, some of the support given to weaker readers is not as precise as it should be. When this happens, adults working with pupils, including those with SEND, do not ensure that pupils practise their early reading and writing as well as they should. Leaders need to further refine their training for staff to ensure that support for pupils' reading and writing development is of a consistently high quality.
- Governors have not given sufficient attention to the quality of education and some of the school's safeguarding arrangements. They are generally too accepting of information that they receive from leaders. They have not given sufficient challenge to leaders, particularly about subjects other than English and mathematics. Governors should quickly arrange training to help them assure themselves on the rigour and suitability of the school's curriculum and safeguarding arrangements.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	131057
Local authority	London Borough of Waltham Forest
Inspection number	10255360
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Colin Whitehead
Headteacher	Tracey Griffiths
Website	www.barncroftprimaryschool.org
Date of previous inspection	17 and 18 October 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school currently uses one registered provider of alternative provision.
- The school is a small, one-form entry primary school.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection started on 25 April. In a joint agreement between Ofsted, the school and the local authority, the inspection was paused. It then resumed, with the same inspection team, on 4 May and concluded on 5 May 2023.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior staff. The lead inspector also held separate meetings with representatives from the local authority and the local governing body.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to teachers and pupils about their learning. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at pupils' work, reviewed leaders' curriculum thinking and spoke to leaders about other subjects and areas of learning in the early years.
- Inspectors met with leaders with responsibility for safeguarding and behaviour. They reviewed a range of documentation, including pre-employment checks on staff, case studies and attendance information. Inspectors also considered the views of parents, staff, pupils and the local authority to help evaluate the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors considered replies to Ofsted Parent View and the online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Sam Hainey, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David Lloyd

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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